

## JOB CLUBS — PROMISING PRACTICES



Our last Bulletin provided guidance on how to start a club for your program's participants:

<https://etagrantees.workforce3one.org/view/2001407734921555389/info>].

This follow-up Bulletin examines promising practices for job clubs and gives you several useful tips to ensure that your group sessions meet their intended purpose.

🔗 **Determine the club's values and rules.** Most job clubs have a set of rules that reflect their core values. The rules serve as guides for how members will interact and may be formalized into a "member agreement" or "covenant." Examples of job club rules include:

- Attend all meetings. Let someone know in advance if you cannot attend.
- Maintain the confidentiality of the other members.
- Participate honestly in the job club - with enthusiasm and compassion.
- Share your knowledge and experience.
- Be respectful of one another. Be encouraging; give constructive feedback.
- Give and accept help.
- Do not monopolize the group - let everyone have a turn.
- Pay-it-forward. When you find a job, return to assist others.
- Limit the amount of time spent complaining.

🔗 **Decide on a meeting flow.** Job club sessions should have an agenda which will vary depending upon the purpose or focus of the group. Below are two sample agendas. One is for a job club that focuses on networking and the other is for a skills-focused support group.

### NETWORKING JOB CLUB

- Welcome
- Introductions and news items
- Review of prior week's job search against goals
- Sharing of job leads
- Guest speaker - local employer
- Small group breakout - networking
- Break
- Small group breakout - networking
- Goals for the coming week

### SKILLS FOCUSED CLUB

- Welcome
- Introductions and news items
- Individual questions/issues for group to discuss and brainstorm
- Speaker - One-Stop Job Developer
- Break
- Skills exercise - résumé feedback
- Sharing of job leads
- Closing motivational thought

🔗 **Create a list of speakers and topics in advance.** Some job clubs - often those with an educational focus - have a standard curriculum covered cyclically over a set number of weeks (e.g., 10 weeks). Others are less structured and more fluid. In either case, you want to create a list of topics to cover and speakers you would like to invite in advance. Consider inviting industry experts, HR managers, and placement agency representatives.

☞ **Know your limitations.** A job club facilitator must know the limits of his/her expertise and be prepared to fill in the knowledge gap with speakers or experts.

☞ **Develop a list of referral resources.** Many job club attendees will have needs that may be barriers to employment. It is helpful to have a list or database of referral resources available at the meetings so that these needs can be addressed as they are identified.

☞ **Provide handouts to the group.** To add value to each session, it's useful to develop and distribute handouts that reinforce the concepts covered in a session or serve as a resource in the job search process. These may include self-assessment instruments, job search organizers and schedulers, networking tips, sample thank you letters, etc.

An excellent collection of handouts can be found on the community of practice website at <https://partnerships.workforce3one.org/page/resources/1001110152297952290>.

☞ **Celebrate success.** When a job club member secures employment, invite them to return and celebrate his/her success. This provides positive reinforcement for the mutual efforts of participants and helps motivate those who are searching for employment.



☞ **Inoculate against failure.** While it's important to offer encouragement, it's also necessary to set realistic expectations and prepare members for any rejections they might experience on the path to employment. This will inoculate them against failure and help prevent any rejections from derailing their job search efforts.

☞ **Establish a pay-it-forward culture.** Encourage members who find employment to return and assist others. They can help participants develop their network or serve as mentors.

☞ **Create a LinkedIn group.** LinkedIn is a social media website that is frequently used by human resource professionals to identify and vet job candidates. It is very useful to create a closed LinkedIn group for a job club. The group can be used to share information about upcoming events, post job announcements, and provide a forum for group members to share their experiences or request assistance.



☞ **Engage in assessment and renewal.** Job clubs need to be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they are meeting the needs of participants. It is recommended that you distribute a brief evaluation form at the end of each session. You should be prepared to adapt the club's activities because the dynamics and needs of the group may evolve as turnover occurs.

☞ **Get the word out!** As your job club gains traction and gets results, reach out to the local media and let them know about your efforts. Media coverage will help your organization and job club members expand their network of employers.

## RESOURCES

A wealth of resources related to job clubs can be found at the community of practice website at <https://partnerships.workforce3one.org/page/resources/1001109737791946419>.